



**E-Newsletter** [www.house.gov/simpson](http://www.house.gov/simpson) **September 17, 2003**

RIGHT — Students and Congressman Simpson watch famous sculptor Paige Bradley unfold a wire armature. Simpson invited Bradley to tour high schools, colleges and local children's clubs to talk about the importance of art education and encourage creativity. Studies show that children, who are exposed to art, are not only more creative, but gain critical thinking skills. Simpson also hosted "Art in the Atrium," with the help of Albertsons to raise funds for children's art programs.



Congressman Simpson joins children at the Ada County Boys and Girls Club in molding clay to create realistic clay figures. Children created ballerinas, soccer players, gladiators, muscle men, and self portraits.

## Message from Mike

Welcome back to the e-newsletter. Congress is back in session after the August work period. It was great to be in Idaho for six weeks and hear your concerns. During that time I crisscrossed the district from Boise to Burley, American Falls to Malad, from Stanley to Pocatello and from Idaho Falls to Challis. I toured farms and businesses, met with ranchers and conservation groups and talked with local legislators throughout the state. Now that Congress is back in session, we will continue work on the budget. Most of the 13 appropriations bills have passed the House and are now in conference with the Senate.

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## Weekly Website

You don't have to travel to Washington, D.C. to see the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Check out:  
**[www.nmaa.si.edu/](http://www.nmaa.si.edu/)**

## Federal Facts

*On September 17, 1787, members of the Constitutional Convention signed the final draft of the Constitution.*

## Idaho History Quiz

What is Idaho's state bird?

Answer this question correctly and you'll be featured in next week's e-newsletter!

Congratulations to Clint Blackwood of Filer, Idaho who correctly answered that Mt. Borah is Idaho's highest peak at 12,662 feet. It was named after U.S. Senator William Borah who served from 1907 until 1940.

## Quote of the Week

*"It is a mistake to try to look too far ahead. The chain of destiny can only be grasped one link at a time."*

*"The price of greatness is responsibility."*

— Sir Winston Churchill

## House Passes Idaho Transportation Projects

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman Mike Simpson voted for legislation appropriating \$13.175 million earmarked for Idaho transportation projects. The funding was included in the FY 2004 Transportation, Treasury and Independent Agencies Appropriations bill passed by the House of Representatives, 381 to 39.

"This bill contains important funding for Idaho's most pressing transportation needs," said Simpson, a member of the House Appropriations Committee. "As Idaho's economy continues to grow, we must ensure that our transportation system also expands. This bill builds on current and future transportation needs by funding new construction, like a new air traffic control tower at the Boise Airport, and renovation and replacement of bridges and highways like the I-84 Glenns Ferry to King Hill project."

The transportation appropriations bill provides \$89.3 billion in overall spending including increases in highway spending and the airport improvement program, as well as promoting capital investment in transportation. The following are specific earmarks included for Idaho:

- \$6 million for the Boise Airport to construct a new air traffic control tower.
- \$1 million to provide maintenance on I-84, Glenns Ferry to King Hill.
- \$2 million for US Highway 2, Dover Bridge for bridge replacement and rehabilitation.
- \$75,000 for Idaho's National Scenic Byways.

\$100,000 for the Pioneer Historic Byway Interpretive Site Development.

- \$4 million for the Idaho Transit Coalition to fund regional and local bus services including: the Ada County Highway District's Commuteride, ValleyRide, Blaine County Commuteride, Ketchum Area Rapid Transit (KART), the city of Pocatello and Boise State University.

The bill now goes to a conference committee to reconcile any funding differences between the House and Senate versions.

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# FMID Legislation Heads to President's Desk

The House of Representatives has given its stamp of approval to legislation transferring wells from the Bureau of Reclamation to the Fremont Madison Irrigation District (FMID).

The bill, S. 520, "Fremont Madison Conveyance Act" was unanimously passed by the House. Idaho Congressman Mike Simpson authored a similar bill in the House, but asked House leadership to take up the Senate version of the bill to avoid any delay in conferencing the legislation.

Under Simpson's legislation, the Cross-cut Diversion Dam, Cross-cut Canal and five wells with associated water rights would be owned and operated by the FMID. The district has operated and maintained these facilities since they were constructed.

"This is an exciting development for the many parties that have worked on the issue. For seven years the FMID has worked with local citizens, agriculture producers, the Bureau of Reclamation and conservation groups, to create a transfer agreement that would be acceptable to all interested parties. Because the district handles all the maintenance, it's only logical that they own the title," Simpson said.

The Fremont-Madison Irrigation District provides a supplemental water supply to approximately 150,000 acres of farmland.

## Simpson Votes to Empower Idaho Consumers

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Idaho Congressman Mike Simpson voted in favor of the "Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act," which will empower Idaho consumers through protections against identity theft and inaccurate credit reports. The House of Representatives approved the bill, H.R. 2622, by a vote of 392 to 30.

"Identity theft destroys the lives of millions of Americans. It takes everything away from them – money, time, and their ability to prove who they are. This bill gives our privacy and protection laws sharper teeth and penalties to punish criminals who hurt honest consumers," Simpson said.

Some of the consumer protections in H.R. 2622 include:

- Increases in the effectiveness of consumer-initiated fraud alerts and methods of blocking fraudulent information in personal credit records.
- Requirements for financial institutions to develop procedures to "red flag" incidences of identity theft.
- Improvements in the resolution of consumer disputes.
- Expansion of consumer access to credit information giving consumers the right to review their credit scores and request a free credit report annually.
- New rights for consumers to correct inaccurate information on credit reports and discourage the reintroduction of fraudulent information into the system.



# Back to School

## Toolkit for Teachers

The Toolkit for Teachers provides educators with accurate, easy-to-understand information about No Child Left Behind including helpful information about loan forgiveness, tax credits and liability protection for teachers, links to helpful Web sites, data driven decision making, and guidance on understanding the federal, state and local roles in the No Child Left Behind law.

The Department of Education will distribute No Child Left Behind toolkits for teachers to various education organizations, members of Congress, and teachers around the country. To order a copy of the toolkit, please contact the department at:

1-877-4-ED-PUBS (1-877-433-7827), TTY/TDD: 1-877-576-7734, Fax: 1-301-470-1244; Order online at: [www.edpubs.org](http://www.edpubs.org), Write to request a copy: ED Pubs, P.O. Box 1398, Jessup, MD 20794-1398 or E-mail: [edpubs@inet.ed.gov](mailto:edpubs@inet.ed.gov)

## Taxcuts for Teachers

As the new school year begins, the Internal Revenue Service is reminding teachers and other educators to save their receipts for purchases of books and classroom supplies. These out-of-pocket expenses may lower their 2003 taxes.

Taxpayers may subtract up to \$250 of qualified expenses when figuring their adjusted gross income (AGI) for 2003. This deduction is available whether or not the taxpayer itemizes deductions on Schedule A. In his budget for next year, President Bush has proposed increasing this deduction to \$400.

The deduction is available to eligible educators in public or private elementary or secondary schools. To be eligible, a person must work at least 900 hours during a school year as a teacher, instructor, counselor, principal or aide.

The IRS suggests that educators keep records of qualifying expenses in a folder or envelope with a label such as "Educator Expenses Deduction," noting the date, amount and purpose of each purchase. This will help prevent a missed deduction at tax time. More information about the Educator Expense Deduction is available online at: <http://www.irs.gov>.

## HOME WORK TIPS FOR PARENTS

Research shows that parent involvement can have either a positive or negative impact on the value of homework. Parent involvement can be used to speed up a child's learning. Homework can involve parents in the school process. It can enhance parents' appreciation of education. It can give them an opportunity to express positive attitudes about the value of success in school.

But parent involvement may also interfere with learning. For example, parents can confuse children if the teaching techniques they use differ from those used in the classroom. Parent involvement in homework can turn into parent interference if parents complete tasks that the child is capable of completing alone.

The U.S. Department of Education publication "Homework Tips for Parents" includes information, in both English and Spanish, about how parents can help their children with homework. It features general homework tips, reading homework tips, and math homework tips. Parents can order a free copy by:

Calling the U.S. Department of Education's Publications Center (ED Pubs) toll-free at 1-877-4-ED-PUBS (1-877-433-7827); TTY/TDD: 1-877-576-7734; FAX: 1-301-470-1244;

Ordering online at: [www.edpubs.org](http://www.edpubs.org); or writing to request a copy: ED Pubs, P.O. Box 1398, Jessup, MD 20794-1398.

# Homeland Security

*In an effort to prepare all Americans, the Department of Homeland Security has created <http://www.ready.gov>. To join in this effort, Congressman Simpson's e-newsletter will feature weekly topics designed to keep Americans safe. Today's e-newsletter is part of a four step plan to prepare for the unknown. Topics include: food and water, clean air, first aid and supply check-lists. Last week's topic was about emergency supplies. Today's topic is clean air. Next week's topic is preparing for special needs during an emergency.*

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Many potential terrorist attacks could send tiny microscopic "junk" into the air. For example, an explosion may release very fine debris that can cause lung damage. A biological attack may release germs that can make you sick if inhaled or absorbed through open cuts. Many of these agents can only hurt you if they get into your body, so think about **creating a barrier** between yourself and any contamination.

## **Nose and Mouth Protection**

Face masks or dense-weave cotton material, that **snugly covers your nose and mouth** and is specifically fit for each member of the family. Do whatever you can to make the best fit possible for children. Be prepared to improvise with what you have on hand to protect your nose, mouth, eyes and cuts in your skin. Anything that fits snugly over your nose and mouth, including any dense-weave cotton material, can help filter contaminants in an emergency. It is very important that most of the air you breathe comes through the mask or cloth, not around it. Do whatever you can to make the best fit possible for children. There are also a variety of face masks readily available in hardware stores that are rated based on how small a particle they can filter in an industrial setting.

Given the different types of attacks that could occur, there is not one solution for masking. For instance, simple cloth face masks can filter some of the airborne "junk" or germs you might breathe into your body, but will probably not protect you from chemical gases. **Still, something over your nose and mouth in an emergency is better than nothing.** Limiting how much "junk" gets into your body may impact whether or not you get sick or develop disease.

There are circumstances when staying put and creating a barrier between yourself and potentially contaminated air outside, a process known as "shelter-in-place," is a matter of survival. You can use these things to tape up windows, doors and air vents if you need to seal off a room from outside contamination. Consider precutting and labeling these materials. Anything you can do in advance will save time when it counts.

Use available information to assess the situation. If you see large amounts of debris in the air, or if local authorities say the air is badly contaminated, you can use these things to tape up windows, doors and air vents if you need to seal off a room.

## **HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air Filtration) Filter Fans**

Once you have sealed a room with plastic sheeting and duct tape you may have created a better barrier between you and any contaminants that may be outside. However, no seal is perfect and some leakage is likely. In addition to which, you may find yourself in a space that is already contaminated to some degree.

Consider a **portable air purifier**, with a **HEPA filter**, to help remove contaminants from the room where you are sheltering. These highly efficient filters have small sieves that can capture very tiny particles, including some biological agents. Once trapped within a HEPA filter, contaminants cannot get into your body and make you sick. While these filters are excellent at filtering dander, dust, molds, smoke, biological agents and other contaminants, they will not stop chemical gases.